

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON TIDAL FINFISHERIES



MINUTES OF JANUARY 16, 2019



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ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dewayne Fox, Ph.D., Chair
Bernie Pankowski
Brian Hoffecker
James "Jay" Little
Marvin Kahl, Jr.
P. "Wes" Townsend
Joseph Smith

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

John Clark
Bruce Cole
Jason Boucher
Chief Drew Aydelotte
David Saveikis, Director

PUBLIC

14 Visitors

Agenda Item 1. Welcome

Chairman Dewayne Fox called the meeting to order at 5:58 PM and welcomed everyone.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of October 17, 2018 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded and the Council unanimously approved the October meeting minutes.

Agenda Item 3. Regulatory Update – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator, stated that, consistent with the Council's July 2018 recommendation, a regulation reallocating the commercial striped bass quota 95% to the gill net fishery and 5% to the hook and line fishery was adopted for the 2019 season. The registration date for both fisheries is February 1 and only permit holders who register will receive quota.

Agenda Item 4. Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) Update – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator, stated that the Summer Flounder commercial issues amendment is still undergoing modifications. There are no updates on the stock assessments for Black Sea Bass and Summer Flounder due to the federal government shutdown.

Agenda Item 5. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Update – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator, stated that the US Fish and Wildlife Service will not pursue a request to have American Eel listed under CITES. ASMFC approved Addendum V to the Coastal Sharks Fisheries Management Plan (FMP), which will allow management of coastal sharks by board action rather than through the lengthier addendum process. The Spiny Dogfish specifications for 2019 were set with a quota for Delaware of 183,183 pounds. The Weakfish Board had asked the Technical Committee (TC) to analyze commercial discards in VA and NC fisheries at the previous meeting. The TC analysis found no trend in Weakfish commercial discards. The harvest specifications for Horseshoe Crab in the Delaware Bay will remain at 162,136 males for 2019. A stock assessment for Horseshoe Crab will be completed in 2019 and is expected to show that the Delaware Bay stock has continued to increase. The Tautog commercial tagging requirements in Amendment 1 to the Tautog FMP were postponed until 2020. Addenda XXXI and XXXII for Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass were approved. Addendum XXXI will allow conservation equivalency for Black Sea Bass in federal waters and

Addendum XXXII allows the setting of annual specifications by board action rather than the addendum process, which could lead to the reallocation of the recreational quota among regions for both species. The 2019 Striped Bass Benchmark Assessment will be a major discussion topic at the February 2019 ASMFC meeting. The Atlantic Menhaden Board will reconsider a postponed motion to find VA out of compliance since they have not instituted the mandatory provisions of the amendment that require VA to cap the harvest of Menhaden at 51,000 metric tons in the Chesapeake Bay.

Agenda Item 6. Anchor netting in the Delaware River – DDFW, Council tabled this discussion until the April meeting.

Agenda Item 7. Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament Update – Bruce Cole, Fisheries Scientist, summarized the history of the Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament program from the 1930s to the present and described the changes implemented during 2017 and 2018. The tournament now includes 15 freshwater species and 30 saltwater species, plus an "Unusual Species" category that includes species not native to Delaware or not currently tournament species. There were 362 tournament entries in 2018 for the live release and weigh-in categories combined. In July 2017, a tournament division for youth anglers ages 15 and under was created for both the live release and weigh-in categories. The citation lengths and weights for the youth division are 25% less than those for the adult division. Mr. Cole presented examples of the newly designed Big Fish plaque, Elite Angler Award, enhanced paper citations and 2018, 2019 and 2020 citation pins.

Agenda Item 8. Director's Update – David Saveikis Fish & Wildlife Division Director, informed the TFFAC that the General Assembly is in session, but the Division has no pending fisheries legislation. The 2019 Fishing Guide will be available on February 7. The Little Creek boat ramp is scheduled for completion in March 2018, the Port Mahon fishing pier has been repaired and reopened, and the Philips Landing boat ramp expansion is currently under construction, with a scheduled completion date of May 1. A law established

in 2018 authorizes the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to issue Sport Fishing License Plates, which will be designed in coordination with the Division and the Council on Recreational Fishing Funding.

Suggested Agenda Items for Next Meeting

1. Anchor netting in the Delaware River.
2. Update on windmills from Coastal Programs.
3. Update on the slot Striped Bass season

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted by



Rebecca Hoover
Recording Secretary

DRAFT